REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are pending. Claims 1, 4-7, 10-13, 16-19, 22-25, 27-30, 32-35, 37-40, and 42-44 stand rejected. Claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 14, 15, 20, 21, 26, 31, 36, and 41 stand objected to. No claims have been amended.

Specification

In response to the instruction in paragraph 3 of the above-referenced Office Action, the specification has been amended to reference the serial number of the related U.S. Patent Application.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,815,082 to Welmer. Welmer does not, however, teach all of the express limitations of the rejected claims. Applicant therefore traverses the rejection and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

In particular, Welmer does not teach the limitation in claim 1 of "receiving over the data bus a status indicator message including a plurality of status indicators *indicating statuses of the first plurality of devices.*" (Emphasis added.) Although the above-

referenced Office Action asserts that FIG. 1, col. 1, lines 15-17, and col. 10, lines 21-23 of Welmer teach this limitation, these portions of Welmer disclose only the use of a single status message indicating the status of a *single* device, not a *plurality* of devices, as required by claim 1 of the present application.

For example, col. 1, lines 6-17 of Welmer state:

> The invention relates to a local communication bus system comprising a serial control bus connecting a plurality of apparatuses addressable via the bus as devices, each device including at least one functional element addressable via the bus as a subdevice, the subdevices in the system including a control subdevice and a further subdevice, the control subdevice including means for generating *a subdevice status request message addressed to the further subdevice in the system*, while *the further subdevice includes means responsive to the subdevice status request message* for returning a subdevice status message to the control subdevice. (Emphasis added.)

This passage describes using a control subdevice to send a status request message to a single further subdevice, and using the single further subdevice to respond to the status request message. This passage does not, however, teach or suggest "including a plurality of status indicators *indicating statuses of the first plurality of devices*," as required by claim 1 of the present application. Rather, Welmer only teaches using the single further subdevice to respond to the status request message with information about the status of the single further subdevice. For example, when a further subdevice receives a "[Monitor Subdevice Status] [on]"

command, the further subdevice may "send an updated [Subdevice Status] message to [an addressed] AVC [audio/video controller] in response to any change in status *within the subdevice*." (Col. 7, lines 27-34.) (Emphasis added.) This passage of Welmer describes using a single further subdevice to respond to a status request message based on a change in status of the *single* further subdevice. Nothing in this passage, or in the disclosure of Welmer more generally, teaches the use of "a status indicator message . . . indicating statuses of *the first plurality of devices*," as recited in claim 1 of the present application.

Welmer does not disclose an express limitation of claim 1 of the present application. Claim 1 therefore patentably distinguishes over Welmer. Claims 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 18, 19, and 24 of the present application include the same or substantially the same relevant limitations as claim 1 and therefore patentably distinguish over Welmer for at least the same reasons.

Claims 25, 29, 30, 34, 35, 39, 40, and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,855,730 to Venners et al. Venners does not, however, teach all of the express limitations of the rejected claims. Applicant therefore traverses the rejection and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

In particular, Venners does not teach the limitation in claim 25 of "transmitting to the master device over the data bus a status indicator message including a plurality of status indicators *indicating statuses of a plurality of slave devices* coupled to the data bus." (Emphasis added.) Although the above-referenced Office Action asserts that col. 2, lines 5-15, and col. 4, lines 50-59 of Venners teach this limitation, these portions of Venners disclose only the use of a single status message indicating the status of a *single* device, not a *plurality* of devices, as required by claim 25 of the present application.

For example, Venners states that each of the peripheral devices 12-24 is provided with an individual controller 80-92. (Col. 4, lines 41-44.) Venners states that a system controller 60 transmits commands "to a selected audio/video device (12-24)." (Col. 4, lines 45-50.) The reference to "a selected . . . device" clearly indicates that commands are sent to a single one of the audio/video devices 12-24.

Venners then states that the receiving device transmits "a status message" back to the master system controller 60. (Col. 4, lines 50-54.) The status message may be displayed to "inform[] the user of the current operating modes *of the selected peripheral device.*" (Col. 4, lines 56-59.) (Emphasis added.) The status message, therefore, indicates the status of only the single selected

peripheral device, not a plurality of slave devices, as required by claim 25 of the present application. More generally, nothing in the passages cited in the above-referenced Office Action, or in any other portion of Venners, teaches "transmitting . . . a status indicator message . . . indicating statuses of a plurality of slave devices," as required by claim 25 of the present application.

Venners does not disclose an express limitation of claim 25 of the present application. Claim 25 therefore patentably distinguishes over Venners. Claims 29, 30, 34, 35, 39, 40, and 44 of the present application include the same or substantially the same relevant limitations as claim 25 and therefore patentably distinguish over Venners for at least the same reasons.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,815,082 to Welmer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,631,850 to Tanaka et al. Neither Welmer nor Tanaka, however, either singly or in combination, teaches or suggests "receiving over the data bus a status indicator message including a plurality of status indicators indicating statuses of the first plurality of devices," as required by claims 5 and 17. Claims 5 and 17 therefore patentably distinguish over the combination of Welmer and Tanaka for at least the reasons set forth above. Applicant

therefore traverses the rejection of claims 5 and 17 and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

Claims 27, 28, 37, and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 4,855,730 to Venners et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,631,850 to Tanaka et al. Neither Venners nor Tanaka, however, either singly or in combination, teaches or suggests "transmitting . . . a status indicator message . . . indicating statuses of a plurality of slave devices," as required by claims 27, 28, 37, and 38. Claims 27, 28, 37, and 38 therefore patentably distinguish over the combination of Venners and Tanaka for at least the reasons set forth above. Applicant therefore traverses the rejection of claims 27, 28, 37, and 38 and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

Claims 10, 11, 22, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,815,082 to Welmer in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,106,091 to Hepworth et al. Neither Welmer nor Hepworth, however, either singly or in combination, teaches or suggests "receiving over the data bus a status indicator message including a plurality of status indicators indicating statuses of the first plurality of devices," as required by claims 10, 11, 22, and 23. Claims 10, 11, 22, and 23 therefore patentably distinguish over the combination of Welmer and Hepworth for at least the reasons set forth above. Applicant therefore traverses the rejection of

claims 10, 11, 22, and 23 and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

Claims 32, 33, 42, and 43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 4,855,730 to Venners et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,106,091 to Hepworth et al. Neither Venners nor Hepworth, however, either singly or in combination, teaches or suggests "transmitting . . . a status indicator message . . . indicating statuses of a plurality of slave devices," as required by claims 32, 33, 42, and 43. Claims 32, 33, 42, and 43 therefore patentably distinguish over the combination of Venners and Tanaka for at least the reasons set forth above. Applicant therefore traverses the rejection of claims 32, 33, 42, and 43 and respectfully requests that it be withdrawn.

Conclusions

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for extension of time is otherwise absent, applicant hereby requests any extension of time. Please charge any fees or make any credits, to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

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